

## Help for parents — fun for children

### Picture special from the Society's Family Help Unit



## A 'risky' race to Brighton

A SPONSORED wheelchair race, which has been described as 'very dangerous' and 'foolhardy,' is all set to take place on September 29. Bob Huke, aged 36, who has multiple sclerosis, and June Dean, 32, who is spastic, plan to race each other to Brighton from London, a distance of 56 miles.

It was on the road to Brighton that one of the worst tragedies involving a sponsored charity event took place, when a number of walkers were mown down, with death and massive injuries resulting.

Bob, who lives at home with his mother and step-father in London, explained their determination to carry on with the race despite the fact that no insurance company will give them any cover. 'We wanted to organise some sort of sponsored wheelchair event, and somebody suggested going round Deptford Park. I said that was too boring: "Let's go daft,"

Cont. on Page 12

## ACTION DEMAND ON BETTER CARE FOR NEW-BORN

EVERY day a desperate shortage of intensive care facilities in and around London means that low birth weight babies are placed at risk of death and handicap, an investigation carried out by The Spastics Society revealed last week.

The research was undertaken by the Society as part of its 'Save a Baby' campaign which aims to stop the needless death and handicapping of babies because of Britain's inadequate maternity services.

A Berkshire hospital revealed that a baby boy, one of twins, died last week after 10 different intensive care nurseries throughout London and the South East were forced to refuse him admittance because they were full up. Three other very sick babies born in the same hospital were also affected by the same problem, and in each case at least nine hospitals were contacted before a place could be found. They were University College Hospital, Hammersmith Hospital, Queen Charlotte's, John Radcliffe, Oxford, The Whittington Hospital in Highgate, St Thomas's, Charing Cross, King's



College, and Reading Hospital.

Places were found eventually for these babies but the delay may have lessened their chances of survival.

Mrs Dorothy Elmer, the mother of the twins, stated: "I went into labour 10 weeks early and both

babies only weighed 1,000 grams. My son died but a place was found for my daughter at an Oxford intensive care unit. She was then 36 hours old. Her chances of survival are much better now that she has been transferred because this hospital did not have a full time ventilator machine."

The Consultant Paediatrician at the Berkshire hospital said: 'The situation is totally unsatisfactory. Because of a shortage of nurses and increasing demand for intensive care it is not possible to rely on getting the right treatment for very small babies with breathing difficulties.'

There are 42 intensive care nurseries for low birth weight babies in England with a total of 175 cots. The report for the Expert

Cont. on Page 10

HAVING a wonderful time is the message, loud and clear, from these young visitors staying at The Spastics Society's East Anglia Family Help Unit at Bury St Edmunds.

Aim of the unit is to allow parents of handicapped children a break from constant care — either for a holiday or at times of family crisis, and as such it has been described as a 'lifeline.' But for the youngsters it is a happy 'home from home,' as you can see from pictures here and on Page 12.

The picture, left, shows Ian Connolly and Andrew Corkett showing what strong lads they are. Above, our 'picture stealers' again — on the inflatable mat with Janet Holland, Trudy West, and smiling house mother April Ray.

## BEST BUYS



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# Briefing...

on books, aids, holidays, services,  
to help you and your family

## Ride in comfort



THE new Braune Batrichair has the same power and capability as the well known Batricar, but a much shorter wheelbase. It has a maximum speed of 4 mph, for pavement use and may be used by the disabled of any age without driving licence or road fund tax.

The Batrichair climbs 4in kerbs and gradients of 1:4. With the seat backrest and steering tiller folded inwards, it may be driven into any estate car with the aid of lightweight loading ramps.

Further details from: Braune Batricar Ltd, Grifin Mill, Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2AZ. Tel: Brimscombe (045 388) 2243/3715.

## Help with mobility problems

A mobility information service has been set up by the West Midlands Disabled Motorists Club. The scheme is being run by two information officers who are themselves disabled, and who have worked in the field of mobility for the past eight years. They hope to encourage would-be drivers to approach them for advice before choosing a vehicle. All too often, they say, disabled people have bought cars unsuited to their needs, or spent unnecessary money on costly controls which in many instances were inappropriate.

A series of leaflets is being planned on subjects such as choosing a car, new or second-hand; hand controls and conversions, buying and leasing.

Written and telephone inquiries can be dealt with from any part of Britain. The address is Copthorne Community Hall, Shelton Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire. Tel Shrewsbury 68383. Outside office hours telephone inquiries should be made to Oswestry 4447 or Tilston 373.

NEWTON Aids has added four new products to its range of Best Buys for the handicapped.

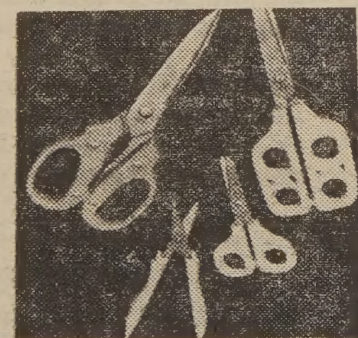
The Universal Table is as multi-purpose as its name suggests. The height adjusts to any position from 19in to 31½in. Adjustment is simple — rubber rings hold the legs in the required position and the table is strong enough to type on — or even stand on. The tabletop is laminated and lipped on three sides, size 39½in x 25in, and the legs fold flat for storage. Price £56.99 plus VAT.

### Eating aid

Spills at the dining table are avoided with the Non-tip Meal Tray. Plate and mug fit into the recessed surface of the tray, which in turn is securely held to the table by suckers on its base. The tray, complete with dish and mug is priced at £6.75 plus VAT.

Two products designed to give mobility to younger children are the Newton Trolley and the Newton Crawler. The Trolley is fitted with 10in wheels with which the child can propel himself, and a single castor at the front counterbalanced by two castors at the rear. It has a timber frame with upholstered seat and backrest, and costs £34.60 plus VAT.

## Sharp answers



LITTLE thought and effort is required by most people when using a pair of scissors and the cutting operation is completed without a second thought. The left-handed person has greater difficulty when using conventional scissors and the task which is simple to many becomes a challenge to anyone suffering from a physical handicap.

PETA (Toolcraft) has designed a range of scissors and shears (some of them are pictured) to meet these needs.

Available are table-top scissors which are self-opening, and can be operated by a person with only one functional hand; a wide range of 'Easi-Grip' self-opening scissors with unique ergonomically designed handles; dual-control training scissors with double handles; kitchen shears with extra wide-grip loops to accept swollen fingers, and even a fist-grip scissor which enables the blind to feel exactly where they are cutting.

Further information from PETA (Toolcraft) Ltd, West-cliff-on-Sea. Tel (0702) 352719.

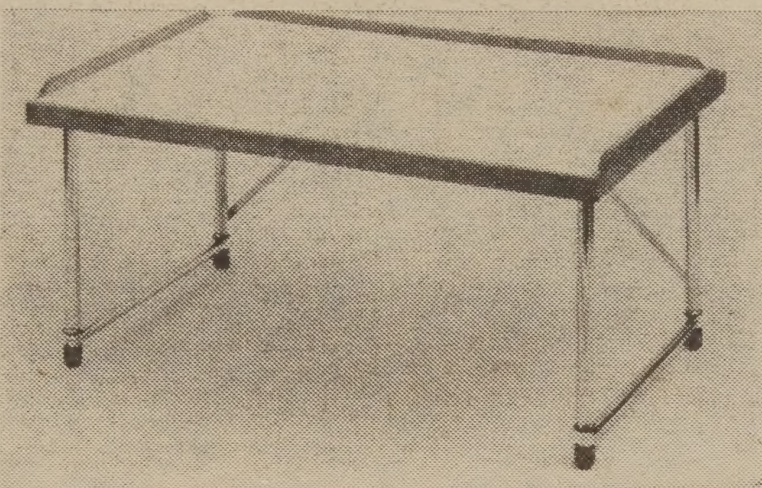
## Clever new quartet from Newton Aids

The Crawler is for the child in a prone position. It is fitted with four castors and is shaped and upholstered for support and comfort. Price is £18.50 plus VAT.

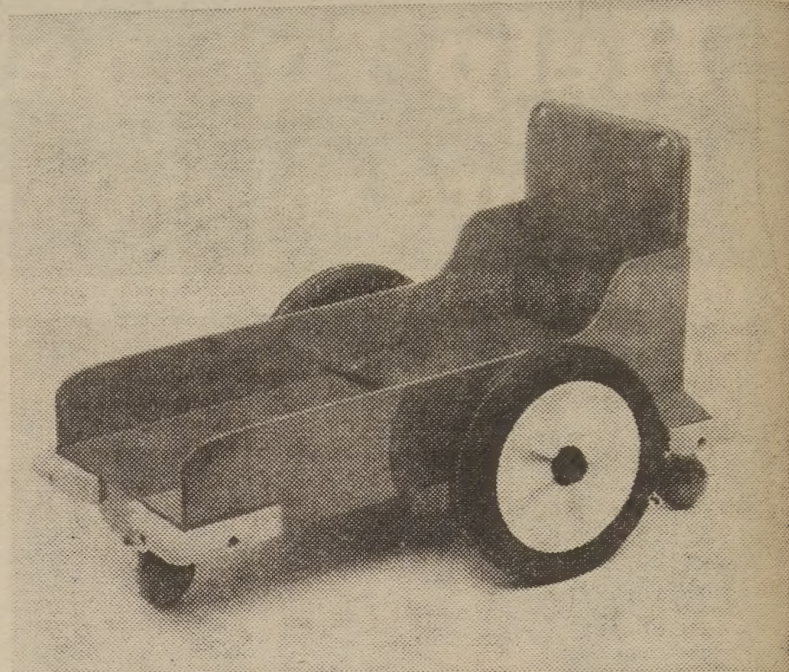
Further information on these products can be obtained from Newton Aids Ltd, Unit 4, Dolphin Industrial Estate, Salisbury SP1 2NB.



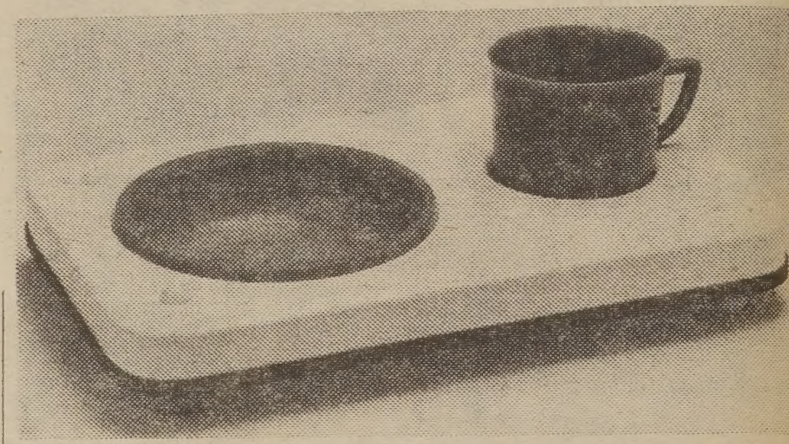
The Crawler



Universal Table



Newton Trolley



Non-tip Meal Tray

## Easing the pressure

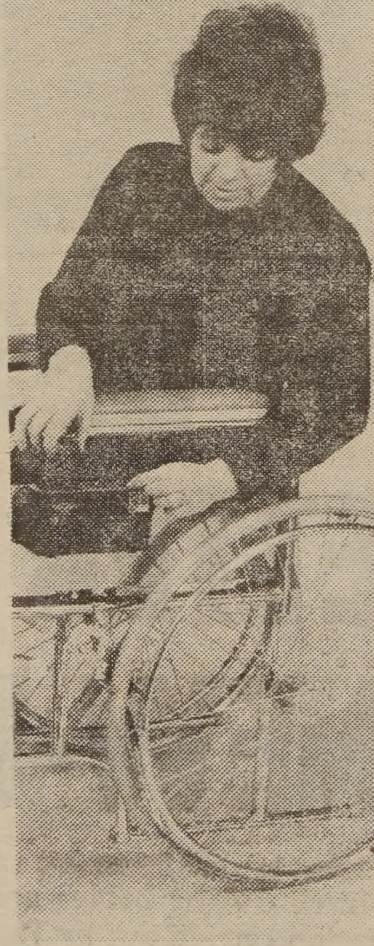
TALLEY Medical Equipment of Borehamwood produce a portable battery operated ripple cushion designed for wheelchair use, but also suitable for easy chairs, aircraft seats, or any situation where an individual needs support to prevent painful sores occurring after long periods of seated immobility.

The ripple cushion works on the principle that pressure in air cells alternates automatically to provide continual movement and relieve pressure points. The battery operates for 12 hours and can be recharged from the mains overnight. The cushion can also be used in bed and the equipment is portable, both the battery and its own charger weighing only 1½lb each.

When used with a power-driven wheelchair, it can be operated from the wheelchair battery by means of an adaptor plug, thus saving on a charger. A selection dial on the power pack allows the pressure in the ripple cushion to be altered for maximum comfort.

Further information from: Talley Medical Equipment Ltd, 47 Theobald Street, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 4RT.

● The picture shows the power pack for the Talley Ripple Cushion in position on the wheelchair. The



battery (shown being removed) can operate the cushion for 12 hours and is rechargeable from the mains.

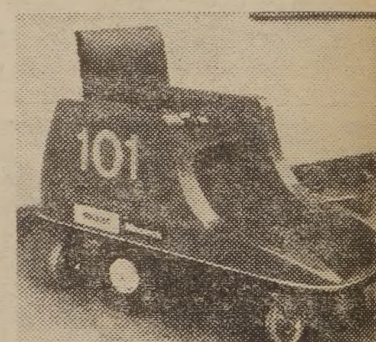
## For young 'drivers'

MALDEN CARE—makers of the Rally Special — has introduced another vehicle for disabled children. The new vehicle is particularly suitable in cases where a child would benefit most from a normal sitting position.

The Monarch, which is powered by two batteries, is technically similar to the Rally in that it is operated by means of a simple joystick. It will also negotiate rough ground and kerbs of up to 3in without difficulty.

Its top speed of 2.5 mph makes it safe out of doors and an optional half speed switch can be used to control an over-zealous driver indoors, and the vehicle is suitable for children from six years right up to teenage. A compact, specially designed battery charger is available which means that batteries do not need to be removed from the vehicle. An overnight charge is enough for a full day's 'motoring.'

Further information from: Malden Care, Malden House, 579 Kingston Road, Raynes Park, London SW20 8SD. Telephone 01-543 0077.



## Travel by train

RADAR, with the co-operation of British Rail, has now produced a revised edition of the British Rail Guide which was originally published in 1975.

'British Rail 1979 — A Guide for Disabled People,' gives information on travel arrangements for disabled people, special facilities for the blind, new rolling-stock which takes into account the needs of the disabled traveller.

Details of parking, access, ramps, refreshment and toilet facilities and telephone numbers of 420 stations are included in the guide, to enable prospective disabled travellers to contact the stations concerned for information and assistance.

Enclosed with the guide is the latest leaflet on rail travel prepared by the Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled. This gives full details of all rail travel facilities for disabled people.

The guide for disabled people is available from RADAR Publications, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB. Price £1.15, including the cost of postage.

## Homework brings more than cash

THE Homework Section of The Spastics Society seeks not only to give the most disabled the chance to earn money, but also to fully realise any of their other capabilities. Mr Arthur Dobson, the Homework Manager, said: 'Among our workforce are those who would like to be writers or develop all kinds of unusual hobbies. Others can think problems through and master techniques to enable other crafts to be exploited, while still others find they have organising abilities and personalities which

means they not only produce the goods, but go on to make sales.' Mr Dobson feels very strongly that such enterprise is only inadequately covered by the phrase 'Homework Section operations'.

Brenda Cook lives at Walney Island, Cumbria, and has carved a new career for herself organising jewellery parties.

She said: 'I find I get bookings at least once a week and sometimes more and everyone is most welcoming. I get out a lot more and have made quite a few good friends through doing this. Besides feeling

more useful, I am helping our budget financially and the family quite enjoy helping set the display. Even my youngest helps if I have to take him with me.'

'The parties vary from coffee mornings, afternoon teas and evenings. I am now known all around as the "jewellery lady." I hope if anyone else gives it a try, they will get as much satisfaction as I do.'

Mr Dobson feels that: 'The Homework Section is helping to advance the quality of life for those spastic people who feel employment is not enough.'



# 'Nothing like messing about in a boat'

THE Spastics Society's Recreational Services Department launched one of its holiday parties on a completely new venture when five disabled people and a helper joined a holiday party aboard the hotel boat 'Cavendish' for six days cruising on the Norfolk Broads. In the group from the society were Mr Anthony Belson, 25, and Miss Elizabeth Fox, 28, both from Thorngrove Agricultural Centre; Miss Joanna Craig Waller, 34, from Lymington, and Mr Richard Daggett, 24, from Yorkshire. Miss Valerie Lang, a spastic librarian from London, acted as party leader, while PC Eamonn Desmond, also from London, accompanied the group as helper and life-saver. In the event, all he was required to fish out of the water was a sandal—his own!

## Success

It was the first time that the Society had experimented either with a holiday on the Broads, or with such a small party. On both counts it was a success, with holidaymakers hoping that similar trips might be run in the future.

The boat (or 'Boatel' as it was called) was spacious, carrying 10 passengers in single and double cabins, and a crew of two. It had a comfortable lounge/dining room with large picture windows, and an upper deck for sunbathing. Many hours were spent on deck, some holidaymakers sunbathing while others preferred to stay wrapped up against the wind. A wide view of the Broads could be had from the sun deck, while during the

frequent stops members of the group climbed to the top of a restored windmill, shopped, explored Broadlands towns and villages with the rest of the boat's guests, and visited pubs or discos in the evenings. Others stayed on the boat, listening to tapes, reading or playing cards.

It owed its success to many things. The weather was reasonably good, so that the group was never cooped up for long below deck. The crew was marvellous, making everyone feel at home, and providing comfortable surroundings. The other holidaymakers were friendly, inviting members of the Society's group to join them on outings. PC Desmond was the ideal helper, being part of the group; always around when needed; but happy to leave people to their own devices unless called upon to help. It was a most enjoyable holiday.

# Determined Carol has plans for 'Utopia'

MRS Carol Meyer, Principal of White Lodge Centre for Spastic Children in Chertsey, has a new project in mind. She is determined that Perry Hill School, Worplesdon, an old disused Surrey village school, should be converted into a leisure and recreation centre to be run mainly by handicapped people themselves. Facilities would include greenhouses and gardens where handicapped adults could grow flowers and plants; and also a bar and coffee lounge for relaxation.

'People think it is an impossible Utopia, but I am determined the centre will be open within two years,' states Mrs Meyer, who is well known locally for her indefatigable fundraising activities in aid of her own centre for spastic children.

If the village recreation centre for handicapped adults did go ahead in Worplesdon, it would be a case of history repeating itself, for the White Lodge Centre saw its first beginnings in Worplesdon Village Hall.

# 'Friendship first — competition second'



A SPIRIT of 'Friendship first — competition second' — the newly reported sporting philosophy of the Chinese People's Republic — has always been evident at the annual National Spastics Games. And one of the competitors

is even clutching a Panda for good luck!

Location this year was the Trent Polytechnic Sports Arena, Nottingham, where competitors aged between 10 and 62 from all over the United Kingdom gathered over the weekend of July 21 and 22. Events

included wheelchair and tricycle slaloms, long jump, target throw, and distance and precision javelin. Over 57 schools and centres were represented.

Full report and pictures in the September issue of Spastics News.



# Gifts after 20 years of service

FAREWELL handshakes from Mr Raymond Smith, Warden of The Spastics Society's centre, Drummonds, Feering, for Mr Ron Maiden and his wife Frances, who were retiring after 20 years of service. The couple's retirement gifts included an alarm radio and a teamaker.

Picture courtesy of Essex County Newspapers

# Degree of success for Sharon

TWENTY - seven-year-old Sharon Hennigan from Bolton, a former pupil at the Society's Thomas Delarue School, has been awarded a degree in psychology.

During the four years Sharon has been a student at Bolton Institute of Technology she has had to cope not only with two stays in hospital for ankle operations, but also with failing eye-

sight which meant she could no longer drive her invalid car. Fellow students helped out with transport on a rota basis until the local authority was able to provide a taxi service.

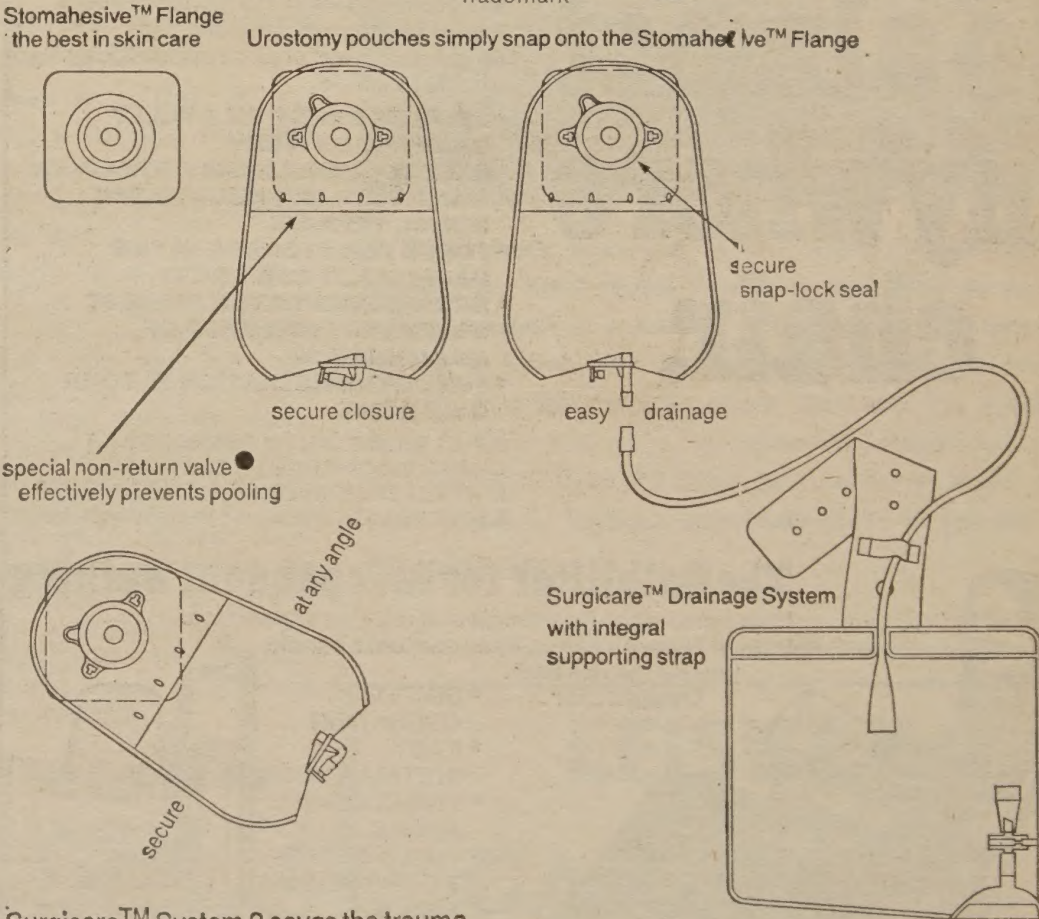
'Everyone at the college has been marvellous,' says Sharon. 'They have helped in every possible way and I cannot thank them enough.'

Sharon, who gained seven 'O' levels and two

'A's' while at Delarue, 'As' while at Delarue, had to rely on tape recordings and special telescopic spectacles for her college studies, and a former student accompanied Sharon at her finals where he wrote at her dictation.

Says Sharon: 'No matter what, I will use my degree to help and encourage other handicapped people, either in a voluntary or a professional capacity.'

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## Seeking 80,000 answers

SINCE the launch of the Replacement Specialised Vehicle Project in February, 80,000 questionnaires have been distributed throughout the UK.

The action group was formed to focus attention on the plight of disabled people who have lost their wheels as a result of the government's decision to withdraw the invalid trike.

Forms must be returned to RSVP by August 31, 1979, after which a detailed analysis will take place.

For further information and application forms, write to Carol Miller, The Replacement Specialised Vehicle Project, Leatherhead Court, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 0BN.

SCOTSCRAIG Round Table auction and jumble rumble raised over £700, of which £131 will go to the local spastics fund and the balance to the community service fund.

### For sale

**FOR sale:** Electric power-driven, left-hand operated Bec chair. Purchased in 1976, but never used; £265. —Tel 01-472 6934.

**BATRICAR** by Braune of Stroud, battery operated, 12-mile range. £350. —Ring: Gale, Beaconsfield (04946) 3487.

# The blooming good idea that grows and grows...

WHEN Ted Rhodes first had a blooming good idea he had no way of knowing that it would flourish and grow rather along the lines of Jack's Beanstalk. He decided on his very own road show taking plants to people instead of waiting for it to happen the other way round. The scheme needed careful cultivation, a word dropped in the ear of a managing director here, a remark to a company executive there, until the seed had taken root.

Nowadays pelargoniums and poinsettia, geraniums and rubber plants are all cash crops for the Society's Agricultural centre in Gillingham, Dorset, Thorngrove, where Ted is General Manager.

The Thorngrove van with its distinctive rose motif draws up outside factories, as far apart as Basildon in Essex and Cardiff in South Wales and manufacturing everything from cigarettes to leathergoods, on a regular rota twice a year. Inside is stowed the making of a mini-market, with stalls so that the stock can be displayed to advantage. Phil Hunter, Thorngrove's production manager is there to give advice to budding gardeners.

Almost 50 factories are visited in the course of the

year—a tight schedule as the Rhodes show is off the road January, February and August—and the turnover is of upwards of 6,500 plants. Depending on the time of year the cargo consists of a mass of fuschias, chysanthemums, jasmine and another 20 or so top selling varieties.

Economics is the watchword of the enterprise so Ted will not send the van into a factory which has less than 500 employees, and the usual route is for him to be approached after a fortuitous meeting with a high ranking member of the firm. However Ted recalls one occasion when the wife of a shop steward demanded the service as a facility for workers.

Now commercial firms are beginning to copy Ted's idea of taking goods to the customer on the factory floor, and he has heard of cosmetics being sold in this way. Fuschias score first in the factory favourite league, followed by jasmine with ferns third, and the total income from Thorngrove's factory sales is somewhere in the region of £5,500—proving that Ted's idea has come up lovely.

LIZ COOK



● PHIL Hunter, Thorngrove's production manager and Opposition leader James Callaghan both chose the same day to visit a Cardiff factory, and Mr Callaghan was obviously impressed with the fine show of blooms on display at the Thorngrove 'road show.'

## Bedfont hit the jackpot

AT the annual garden fete held in July, which was opened officially by Ray Edmonds, three times world amateur snooker champion, The Bedfont 'hit the jackpot' in its fund-raising by exceeding any other year's total raised at this event since the hotel was opened in 1963.

The sum raised was £1,040 clear profit.

The proceeds will be used to equip the new recreation room, which is being built to provide further facilities for guests at the Society's hostel.



## Angling for a cash catch

A WESTON-SUPER-MARE fisherman is angling for a catch worth £9,000 in aid of spastic children. John Reader, 38, plans a leviathan sponsored fish-in on a nearby lake for 23 days non-stop, followed by a second wave of 25 days in Gloucestershire later on. Mr Reader, who has already landed a place in the Guinness Book of Records, hopes to beat his last year's long-haul record of 504 hours.

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## Exhibition success for centre products

MIKE Loseby, Works Centres Liaison Officer for The Spastics Society, shows off some of the contract work produced by the work centres to a potential customer at the Sunday Times Business to Business Exhibition at Earls Court. Hilary Puryer, Residential Services Officer, looks on.

As a result of the stand at the exhibition, orders were received from both the UK and abroad. Mike Loseby commented that this was the first time The Spastics Society had ever had a stand in an exhibition solely to promote the work centres. 'But we'll certainly be back next year,' he added.

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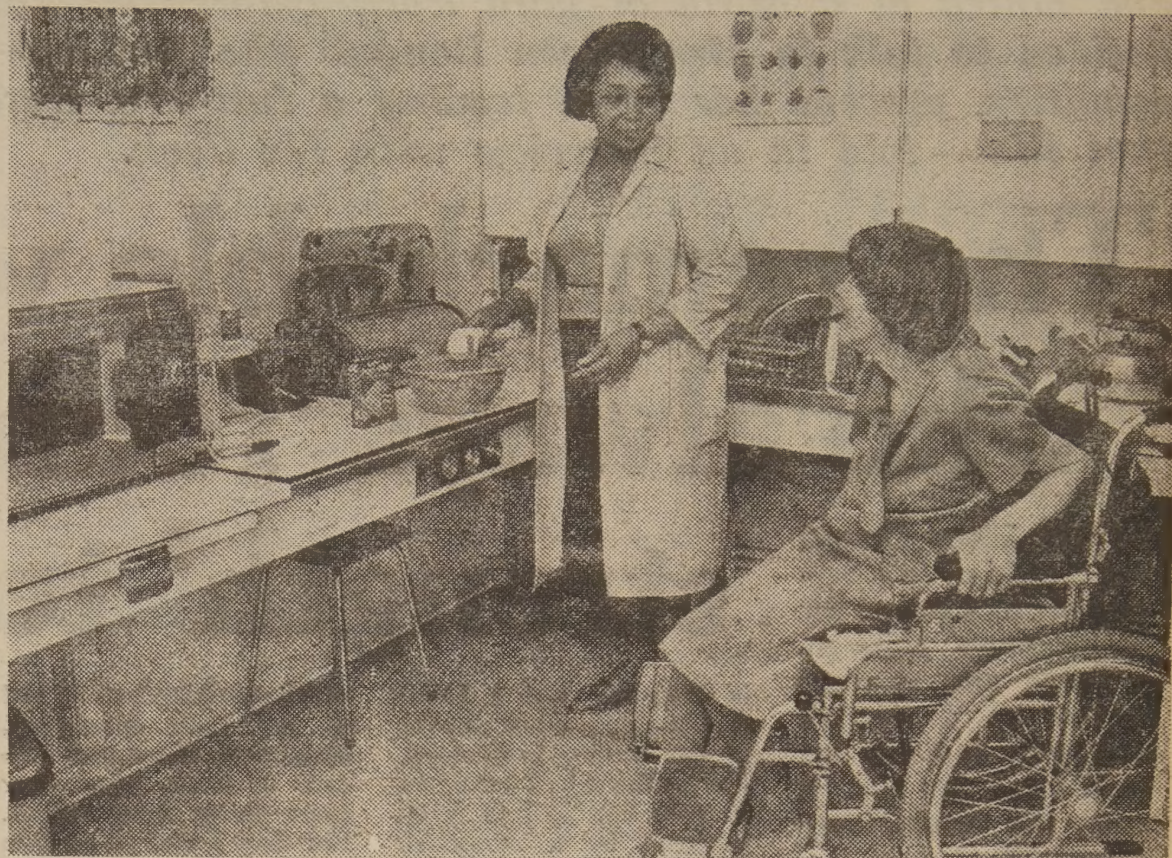
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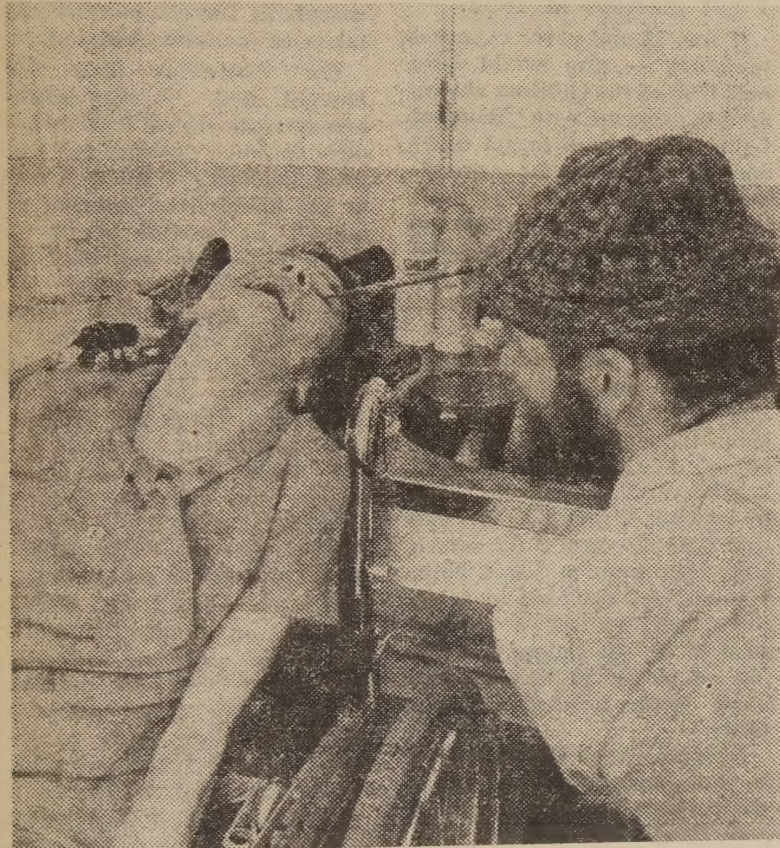
# Private lives in 'Tranquillity'



● MRS Mary Russell (right) is the Community Assistant to the Habinteg project in the City of London. She has her own flat in the block and is on call to help the disabled residents. One of Mary's routine daily jobs for Ann and Vic is transferring the milk out of the usual glass bottles into easy to handle unbreakable baby bottles which Ann can grasp and hold. Mary Russell also lends a helping hand whenever Vic wants to wear a shirt and tie for a 'dress-up' occasion.



● HOME help Joyce who comes once a week on a Friday morning is part of the excellent back-up support provided by Islington Social Services. Joyce helps with vacuuming, or she may do some additional shopping or food preparation. During the rest of the week Ann cooks the meals on her microwave oven, which she says prevents her burning herself. All the kitchen working surfaces are at wheelchair height.



● AS well as painting landscapes, Vic is also an accomplished make-up artist! Ann relies on Vic to apply her eye shadow in the mornings. Altogether it takes Ann and Vic a whole hour to get up and dressed in the morning, so they take the opportunity to tune in to Talking Books for the Handicapped at the same time.

## Happiness is a home of their own

RESIDENTS of town flats — the sort with a buzzer panel and an entryphone system — don't usually give their homes a name. But when Ann and Vic Hancox moved into their new Habinteg block, right in the City of London, they promptly called their flat 'Tranquillity' because as Ann explains, 'It's a chance to run our own private lives after 30 odd years of being in care.'

Ann and her husband Vic moved into their new two-bedroomed Habinteg flat last February. 'There are still times when we have difficulty in believing we are really living by our-

selves in a flat. It has been a terrific struggle to gain this success, but very worthwhile,' says Ann.

Both one-time residents of The Spastics Society's residential centre Coombe Farm, Ann and Vic had lived for the past six years in a local authority home in Croydon. Here they had a private sitting room and bedroom of their own, but meals were served communally along with the other residents. As part of their preparation for independent living, Ann and Vic, began to get their own breakfast.

### Two's company

'To have a meal in each other's company was simply bliss,' say s Ann, and Vic learned to boil eggs in a tin mug with a the eggs out of the mug with a spoon fitted in his mini handheater, taking helmet.

Ann and Vic continue to work at 'independence' at their local day centre, St John's in North Islington, where self-reliance is encouraged. Users at the centre can take their washing along and they take turns to cook the midday meal. Each week there is a visit to a nearby super-



● THE spare bedroom in the Hancox's Habinteg flat doubles as Vic's studio where he paints by means of a brush attached to a helmet. Vic also edits the newsletter for the St John's day centre while Ann writes poetry and articles. But the amenity which Ann and Vic appreciate most in their new flat is the specially adapted telephone. 'It's the first time we have been able to make phone calls ourselves without somebody there to get the number,' says Ann.



● LOOKING after the tomato and geranium plants in their patio garden is a favourite summer evening and weekend pastime for Ann and Vic. Although the Hancox flat is right in the heart of the City of London, there is peace and quiet there as soon as the office workers depart, and the patio catches all the sun.

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SN Aug

Cont. on Page 10



EVERY month Spastics News has a postbag full of letters from all over the world, but one posted in Huntingdon New Town recently was especially intriguing. Written by a grandmother approaching her 60th birthday, it took to task all those who complain of the word 'spastic' and hinted at a world of hard work before the war. Spastics News decided to talk to Mrs Eileen Dougal who has never let her spastic condition prevent her from leading a full life. Here is her story of that life — told in an interview with Liz Cook.

## The remarkable woman who always 'found the strength' to cope

WHEN Eileen Dougal was a child of five, setting off to a school for handicapped children, a horse and carriage driven by a liveried coachman in a top hat would call for her. 'It was', she recalls, 'very romantic'.

Eileen was the baby of a family of eight, born in Brixton and her father was a train driver.

'It must have been early on that they discovered there was something wrong with me because I can remember being in a spinal carriage when I was about three after an operation on my spine. When I was five they let me start at the local school down the road, but I wasn't allowed to try and run about and they only let me stay a fortnight. After that I went to a special school

in Dulwich, and a horse and carriage would call for all the children in the area. But by the time I left when I was 16, it had been replaced by a motorised ambulance.

'We were taught the three R's and then when we were 14 we were trained to do needlework, leatherwork and art to prepare us for work.'

Life was very hard for the young Eileen, for her mother had died when she was only six and for years, Eileen lived at home with just her father and two brothers.

When she left school she went straight into service, caring for the three children of a doctor whose wife had been on the committee

of the special school. 'I had to get their breakfasts, clean their shoes and take care of them when they came home from school. But then I had to go into hospital for yet another operation to see if my walking could be improved because I was wearing out my boots in a fortnight. I had countless operations but they did not do any good — instead they made me worse.'

'I used to be able to make my way along the road but after all the operations I was forced to use two sticks. But I never had any problem finding work — I was always in full employment — I cannot understand the difficulty youngsters have today!

'When I came out of hospital I went to work at a glove factory trimming gloves, starting at 8 am and working till 6 pm with an hour for lunch. When the Second World War started, I was asked if I wanted to be evacuated, but I refused.

'A friend was at the John Groom Crippleage so in December 1939 I went there. I stayed for two years but after being brought up in a large family I found the communal life just did not suit me. We made artificial flowers, but in the end I decided I wanted to do war work. I went to a factory in Kilburn which made breathing apparatus for airmen, again working from 8 am to 6 pm, and no concessions were made because I was disabled.

'I have never had any concessions made for me — I have always maintained my independence wherever I have worked. If I could do the job I just settled down and got on with it, to the best of my ability.

'I had to leave to go to St Thomas's Hospital for yet another operation, this time, on my left leg. St Thomas's was my second home and I have always been very fond of it. When I came out I went to work at the telephone exchange opposite my sister's home



● The craft skills taught to Eileen Dougal at the special school she attended as a girl still bring her much pleasure — and not a few prizes as well.

in Dulwich which meant I just had to cross the road and I was there. I stayed there until after the war when I went to work in the linen room at St Thomas's. It was my last job, because I got married in 1952.

'I was 32 and never expected to marry — who would want me? One of the children always used to greet me with "Wotcher Gran" and I used to get upset and say "I'll never be a grandmother," but it came to pass. Several people wondered whether it would be a good idea — especially when my daughters Jane and Eunice were born.

'My sister kept saying to me "I don't know how you'll manage," but I believe you are given the strength you need to cope. My husband helped bathing and putting the girls to bed but I coped during the day and it wasn't till much later that I got a home help. I would put the girls in a big pram, and set off down the road to do the shopping holding on to the pram with one hand with a stick in the other.'

Eventually the family moved to Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire where the girls grew up, and Jane, now 26, met her future husband while still at grammar school.

Then in December 1977 Eileen was rushed to hospital desperately ill with appendi-

citis. She was allowed home for her 25th wedding anniversary celebration which her husband had arranged for December 20, but she was too poorly to stay overnight. The following day her husband, who had been seriously ill with a heart complaint for six months was taken to the same hospital.

On Christmas Eve Mr Dougal died. 'It was a tremendous shock, we had always done so much together and had been together. I knew I had to get home from hospital as quickly as possible because I knew I had to get used to being there without him.'

Eileen spends her days carrying on the handicrafts she learnt all those years ago at school. Now 59, she is confined to a wheelchair because of a blockage in her spine but her Vessa electric chair to which The Spastics Society contributed £100 has given her outdoor freedom. Her daughter Eunice, 23, is still at home and works locally, and Eileen goes out on a Saturday morning to do a bit of shopping and go round the market. 'I help my local church's children's class with handicrafts, and I spend my days surrounded by handicraft materials. I have twice won certificates at the Cambridgeshire County Show for my crochet.

'I have had a very happy life — and I don't regret a thing.'

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## A speech worth £100

BARROW-in-Furness is a black spot as far as perinatal mortality rates are concerned with a figure of 28 per cent compared with the national average of 17.7, in 1976, and a continuing bad record since then. Earlier this year Harold Sharpe, of the Barrow Spastics Society's executive committee, himself a spastic, was asked to address the Barrow Trades Council about the national 'Save a Baby' campaign.

So moving was his address and so intense the interest it generated, that on July 12 Mr Sharpe was presented with a £100 cheque from the council for the campaign appeal.

# House of Commons screening for Society's new film



PICTURED at the House of Commons viewing of 'Feeling Special' were (left to right) Professor J. G. Moore, Professor of Obstetrics, University College, Los Angeles; Nigel Evans, director of the film; Mr A. Curtain, Research Fellow in Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Hammersmith Hospital; Mr Lewis Carter-Jones MP; and Mr James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society.

A SPECIAL showing of "Feeling Special," The Spastics Society's controversial new film criticising current ante-natal care in this country, was held at the House of Commons in July.

The film viewing in the Grand Committee Room Cinema, off Westminster Hall, was arranged by Mr Lewis Carter-Jones, MP for Eccles, and Mr John Hannam, MP for Exeter. Members of the Lords as well as the Commons were able to be present to see the film before rushing back to the debating chamber to hear Minister Patrick Jenkin speaking on the Royal Commission's Report on the National Health Service.

Mrs Lynda Chalker, Parliamentary Secretary at the Department of Health and Social Security, was in the film's audience, as was MP Kevin McNamara, sponsor of a Private Member's Bill due in November. The Bill echoes the belief of The Spastics Society that the existing

maternity grant is hopelessly inadequate.

Kevin McNamara's Bill suggests an increase in grant to £85 — the present £25 grant fixed 10 years ago in 1969 is currently worth only £7.31 in present cash terms. The Bill also recommends that the grant should be index-linked in future.

The Bill suggests that the maternity grant should be paid in two stages, the first instalment due after the first ante-natal check. This would encourage mothers - to - be to make their preliminary visit to the ante-natal clinic much earlier. In the film 'Feeling Special,' a community midwife declares that pregnant women always turn up on the 26th week in order to claim their maternity grant, which medically is far too late.

The film points out that prevention of prematurity in babies is made infinitely more difficult if at-risk pregnancy is not identified early.

A RECENTLY retired Edinburgh general practitioner and an authority on the city's history, has been elected chairman of the Edinburgh Spastics' Appeal Group in succession to Mrs Audrey Sangster. He is Dr Ernest Cormack, chairman of the General Practitioners' Committee of the BMA in Edinburgh.

## A Canadian view on that word 'spastic'

I WOULD like to comment briefly on the controversy surrounding the word 'spastic.'

While 'spastic' legitimately describes the physical condition which I have lived with since birth, here, in North America, the word has a rather derogatory connotation, denoting an individual who is physically awkward and therefore prone to fumble and drop objects — in short, a 'klutz.'

Although fairly obvious, it should not be forgotten that

through the 'tagging' of individuals by labels.

Language is perhaps the most influential weapon known to Man, and as such, the continued use of the word 'spastic' by The Spastics Society will only reinforce and perpetuate the most common myths about handicapped people, and may even contribute

to other factors in preventing handicapped persons from achieving their own feelings of self-worth, independence and self-sufficiency.

Michael Brophy, the Society's Director of Fund Raising, expresses fear that the Society would lose millions of pounds overnight if it changed its name. To this I can only

state that associations and organisations here in North America have never had any difficulty raising funds and have never used such an appellation as 'spastic' in reference to themselves or the handicapped people which they serve. I can only conclude that The Spastics Society is more concerned with profits than with the dignity of its members. How shameful!

Mr Samuel Miller,  
2495 Major Street,  
St Laurent, Montreal,  
Quebec, Canada

## In praise of Gordon

I READ with interest your article on Gordon Taylor who has had a chrysanthemum named after him, and wondered if I might be permitted to add some further information of interest.

In 1956 I started a small workroom for adult spastics

where we did chair seating, weaving cane work, etc. Gordon started there in 1957 and being a rather intellectual young man felt at first it was rather infra dig to learn cane work, etc. But he bravely got down to working with his very clumsy fingers (he was and still is very severely handicapped) and over a long period of patience and perseverance he became quite adept even with intricate handwork. He came to Melville Avenue with me while the new work centre was being built at Bramley Hill and continued to make good progress. By then I had managed to add a small amount of sub-contract work from Philips Electrical which boosted his morale somewhat. In 1964 we returned to Bramley Hill to a wonderful new work centre and Gordon was able to start work in the light engineering and assembly room under Bert Strudwick. He made good progress there and in 1966 was accepted at Meadway Works, Birmingham, where he has worked ever since in the light assembly section, checking and packing the work.

### Driving

His stepmother Kay, who has been a great source of encouragement and support, moved to Yardley a few months later so that Gordon could live at home. In 1968 Gordon learned to drive his electric tri-car and has driven to work ever since.

He joined Yardley Chrysanthemum Society, and won a silver cup and three first prizes the first time he showed his blooms and has won many prizes and medals since.

I am sure Gordon would be the first to admit that his determined efforts to overcome his quite considerable handicaps started in a small room at Bramley Hill in 1957, and we in Croydon should be proud of his achievements.

Alice Hoy,  
Founder member,  
Croydon, Sutton and  
District Spastics Society,  
Purley.

### SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN CEREBRAL PALSY

Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge  
September 24-28, 1979

THE Medical Education and Information Unit of The Spastics Society is organising the above meeting which will be of particular interest to therapists, paediatricians, psychologists, and all those involved with the day-to-day management of the cerebral-palsied child.

The following have agreed to speak:

Positional deformity

Mr George Fulford, FRCS,  
Princess Margaret Rose  
Orthopaedic Hospital,  
Edinburgh.

The management of windswept hips

Mr Adrian Henry, FRCS,  
Guy's Hospital, London;  
Mr David Scrutton,  
Newcomen Centre,  
Guy's Hospital.

Minimal brain dysfunction

Dr Monica Steen,  
Folke Bernadotte Clinic,  
Uppsala, Sweden.

The clumsy child

Mrs Mary Gardner,  
Child Development Unit,  
Charing Cross Hospital, London.

The hand in cerebral palsy

Dr D. M. Hari,  
State Institute for Conductive  
Education of the Motor Disabled,  
Budapest, Hungary.  
Mrs Esther Cotton,  
Ingfield Manor School, Sussex.  
Mrs Nancy Finnie, London.  
Michael le Metayer, France.

Treatment as education

Living with handicap  
Communication between  
therapies

Operant conditioning

Speech delay and its  
management

Participation by invitation is limited to 70 people. The cost of the seminar, which includes seminar fee, accommodation and all meals, is £70 sterling. Since participation is limited it would greatly assist in making domestic arrangements if you could let me know immediately if you would like to attend.

Please write, giving name, address and present employment, to: Miss Dian Coley, Organiser, Medical Education and Information Unit, 5a Netherhall Gardens, London NW3 5RN.

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## Scooping the Pool with £12,500 wins



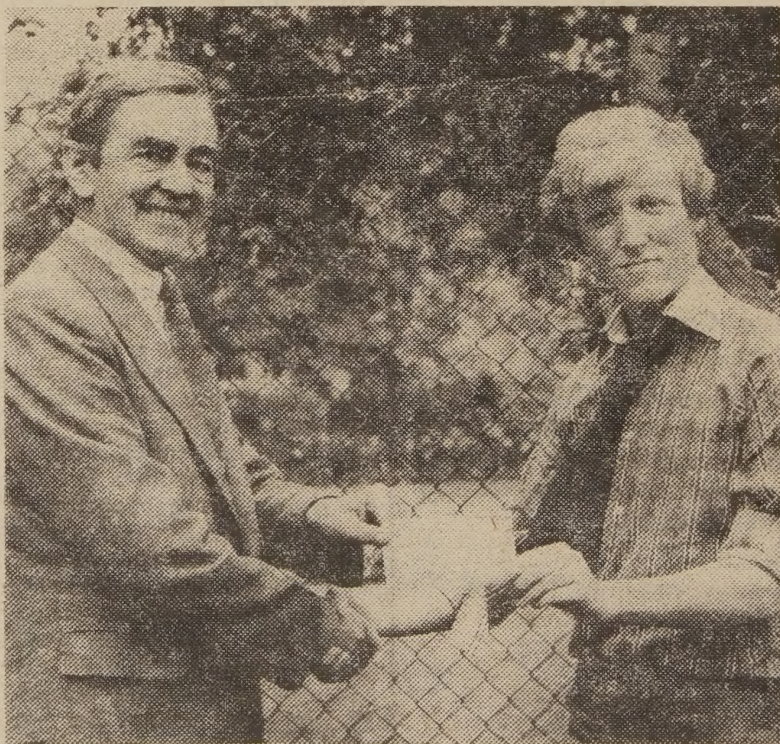
PICTURE shows Mr and Mrs F. Bellamy of Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, looking very happy after receiving a first dividend cheque for £12,500, from Mr E. Curtis (far right), manager of the Society's Sherrards Industrial Training Centre. The presentation took place during a successful barbecue which was held at the Training Centre at Welwyn in July. Looking on are Spastics Pool area supervisor, Mr Lovell and his wife. Mr Bellamy, who is an officer in the Royal Naval Reserve.



### News about the Spastics Pool

A DAY of celebration for 76-year-old Eliza Vallance and her nephews and nieces, when she received a £12,500 first dividend cheque from Judith Lane, right, senior regional officer for The Spastics Society

in London. Said Eliza, who has lived in the same house for 60 years: 'I am going to rig myself out like I haven't done for a long time, and also I am going to spend a lot of my winnings on my nephews and nieces.'



ALISTAIR White receiving a cheque for £500 from the Regional Officer of the Scottish Council for Spastics, Angus MacDonal. Alistair won first prize in a Scottish Spastics Appeal lottery. His winning ticket was sold by Spastics pool collector, R. Finley.

A SPONSORED cycle ride was one of a number of fund-raising activities arranged by public houses in Norton Fitzwarren, Somerset, to provide a mini-bus for handicapped boys and girls at the Monkton Priors School near Taunton. An approach was made to the Bristol-based Good Neighbours Trust, which responded with a £100 donation, and our picture shows George Abbott, Secretary of the Good Neighbours Trust (far right), presenting the cheque to Terry Thorne, who took part in the sponsored cycle ride. Also pictured are Hallem Moseley (second left), Somerset County cricketer, who was invited to break open a large bottle of money by the landlord of the 'Ring of Bells,' Mr R. Peters (second right).





# Crusade for the right to love

CARING and Counseling was the theme of the international conference at Sussex University on July 11, 12 and 13, organised by SPOD, the Committee on Sexual and Personal Relationship Problems of the Disabled.

The opening Ministerial address was given by Mrs Lynda Chalker, Parliamentary Secretary at the Department of Health and Social Security, who announced the award of a £25,000 government grant to further SPOD's work.

'You have declared on behalf of all disabled people the right to the warm and loving relationships which the able bodied have always taken for granted,' Mrs Chalker told the SPOD Committee.

She reiterated SPOD's objectives, which are 'to provide, promote and publicise services to assist and enable disabled people to achieve fulfillment in their sexual and personal relationships and to facilitate as far as possible their full integration into society.'

'People are surprised that disabled people should be concerned about love and sex,' said Mrs Chalker. 'But because of SPOD's publications, conferences



**JONATHAN Griffith**, a senior computer programmer, contributed a paper on the need for introduction and marriage bureaux for the disabled, which was read to the conference delegates by Miss Margaret Morgan, Head of Personal Social Services for The Spastics Society. Miss Morgan, who chaired the afternoon session on the opening day of the conference, was one of the founder members of SPOD.



**BILL Stewart** (right), responsible for much of SPOD's early development, has a campus chat with three conference speakers, all of them people with cerebral palsy. Left: Michael Long, a social worker from Gwent, with Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd, who advocated the training of more disabled people as counsellors, and Danish-born Bodil Blokker-Veggerby.

## — and the right to make mistakes

and training courses, there has been a growing consciousness among professionals. There is still much more to be done, but now most carers will acknowledge the existence of a sexual or emotional difficulty, even though the remedy may not be easy to identify or to put into practice.

The programme for the rest of the opening day of the conference contained a variety of contributions from members of The Spastics Society. Hilary Brown, Head of Life Skills at Dene College, gave a paper entitled 'Sexual Knowledge and Education of ESN Students at Centres of Further Education', which drew on experiences

both at Dene College and Beaumont College.

'Keeping young people, who happen to be handicapped, ignorant about themselves and their sexuality is an effective, if hypocritical, way of ensuring that they stay in their place — in places like subnormality hospitals and overcrowded day care centres. Once "in the know" they will increasingly demand housing, home helps, appropriate residential placements, and above all, a degree of respect in the community which is as yet undreamed of,' Hilary Brown concluded.

The afternoon session on the opening day, Wednesday July 11, was chaired by Miss Margaret Morgan, Head of Personal Social Services for The Spastics Society, who is also a founder member of the SPOD Committee. Miss Morgan told a full lecture theatre that the very fact that so many of the speakers on the panel were disabled people showed that attitudes were changing.

Michael Long, a local authority social worker with cerebral palsy, gave a personal view entitled 'The Difficulties of Establishing Sexual and Personal Relationships for a Disabled Person'.

Counselling for young people in residential care was the topic chosen by Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd, who advocated the training of more disabled people as counsellors.

'In no other place than a residential establishment can I find such a hothouse for both the growth and the destruction of human relationships. Perhaps counselling could alleviate the destruction and aid the growth,' she commented.

Another representative from the Society, Jonathan Griffith, presented a paper, read by Miss Morgan, on 'The Need for Introduction and Marriage Bureaux for the Disabled'.

Jonathan, who is a senior computer programmer, envisaged the possibility of extending the services of existing reputable agencies, only under a different

name. The cost, he said, would be quite large even starting on such a strong foundation and certainly users on low incomes would need to be imaginative and sensitive to open up the new market for the service. Radio publicity should include a phone number for the blind.

It would still be unrealistic to hope to satisfy every search for companionship, said Jonathan. Communication, mobility

and privacy would depend on the co-operation of care staff and relatives, and parents were still quite likely to be violently prejudiced against any close relationship superseding their monopoly of care.

Disabled people, said Jonathan, had the right to make mistakes, to get hurt and recover. Far better hope, joy, pain and fresh hope than just the dull pain of a fading hope that had never really lived.

## 'Having a go' at Castle Priory

THE Spastics Society's Castle Priory College at Wallingford has held its first ever Activity Day with the theme: 'Summer by the River,' when students, parents, helpers, disabled children and adults divided up into groups to 'have a go' at interesting things to do—art, movement, wheel-chair dancing, music and drama.

After lunch they were free to explore the town before putting on a finale of the work they had produced.

Meg Judy, an assistant lecturer at Castle Priory said: 'It was really very great fun. Over and over again we heard parents saying that they really enjoyed the chance to do something with their children. One of the best things was the small play based on "Alice in Wonderland," with the Mad Hatter's tea party by the river. It was really funny and the children could hardly say their lines from laughing so much.'

The only condition of the day was that everybody should 'participate' and Castle Priory's principal, Mrs Joyce Knowles, was so pleased with the day's obvious success, she plans to hold another next summer.



**DELEGATES** from all over the world came to the SPOD conference. In the wheelchair is Irene Pereira from Portugal, who was accompanied by fellow social workers Maria Adelaide and Christine Louro, who work with families with spastic children. Avril Cooper (left), a student from Castle Priory, was one of the volunteer helpers at the conference.

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## Easing the way for disabled travellers

TO many travellers seeking accommodation, narrow doorways, small bathrooms and awkward stairs are, at worst, minor inconveniences. But for anyone confined to a wheelchair they are major obstacles.

And to help people confined to wheelchairs find accommodation with suitable facilities, the Automobile Association has just published its latest 'Guide for the Disabled.'

In his foreword, the Duke of Buccleuch, chairman of the Royal Association for Disability and

for the disabled, and suitable nature trails.

For those seeking self-catering holidays, information is provided about the AA's own Lochanully Lodges, situated in the Spey Valley, close to the Highland village Carrbridge. Two of the 50 lodges have been specially designed to accommodate accompanied wheelchair or physically handicapped visitors.

Another innovation in this year's guide is a list of hotels which, whilst unsuitable for accommodating wheelchair disabled, have adequate facilities for meals only.

There is also invaluable information for disabled motorists about orange and yellow car badge schemes, breakdown assistance, toll concessions, motorway regulations, mobility allowance and the Motability scheme.

Lists of motorway service areas and public conveniences in gazetteer entry towns which have suitable facilities are provided, too, and there is also information about DHSS approved repairers of invalid chairs and three-wheelers in the UK, DHSS Appliance Centres and a list of Tourist Information Offices.

The AA Guide for the Disabled is available free of charge to Association members from AA offices, either post free or over the counter. Price to non-AA members remains £1.

## News about books

Rehabilitation, describes the guide as 'an indispensable part of a disabled person's travelling equipment.'

There are 319 AA-inspected hotels and guest-houses in 231 locations nationwide in the gazetteer section. Listed in county order, they provide accommodation suitable for those confined to wheelchairs.

New features this year include lists of picnic sites which have toilet facilities

## 'Lib' advice for the women who need it most

IF you are disabled or a woman, the society we live in has encouraged you to take a very passive role. If you are both, the result is an over-powering pressure to be submissive and to take what the world gives you with a quiet smile. In the USA women with disabilities have recently gone into the feminist movement and published books designed to help other disabled women take a more positive outlook on life.

'Better lives for disabled women,' by Jo Campling, provides similar, much needed information for British disabled women and should be prescribed reading for all parents, teachers and care staff of children and adolescents with disabilities, as well as disabled women.

We all know that there is no such thing as 'the disabled woman' there are an infinite variety of women with many differing disabilities. In a book of this type there will always be some aspects which are irrelevant to women with particular disabilities. In some places the book seems to be biased towards the woman with an

acquired disability rather than the congenitally disabled woman. However, much is very relevant to the experience of women with cerebral palsy.

The chapters on relationships, sexuality, and self-image are excellent. The variety of methods of contraception are discussed with some of the special considerations for women with disabilities. I would like to have seen more detailed discussion of the implications of sterilisation as a contraceptive for the younger woman, it all sounded a little too simple. The Family Planning Association as an organisation is increasingly aware

of the need to improve access to its services for disabled clients. Some discussion of this issue both from the point of view of the prospective client and the agency might have been useful.

The chapter on pregnancy and motherhood is good in that it exists at all, there is so little literature for the layman on this subject and many difficulties put in the way of disabled mothers because of their lack of confidence and public ignorance. Ms Campling stresses that the physical problems can be solved, which is true—in some way or another they usually can. Children are hardy creatures and a wide variety of care is acceptable to them. I would have liked to have seen more discussion of the possible reactions of parents to emotional difficulties with the child, perhaps in the teenage years, when rejection of parental disabilities is common.

There is more to a woman than her sexuality and information is available about education, work and leisure. There is much of great practical value to women with disabilities, and to their families and friends, packed into a short book.

SUE MILLER

'Better lives for disabled women' is published by Virago. It can be obtained from The Spastics Society at 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ, price £1.



## Care of new-born babies

Cont. from Page 1

Group on Special Care for Babies (1971) recommended that the requirement was then 220 cots.

A recent study undertaken in the North East Thames Region reveals the appalling risks low birth weight babies run. During a three months' monitoring period in early 1978 statistics showed that all the babies weighing less than 1,500 grams (babies under 2,500 grams are defined as low weight) who could not be found intensive care, died. Yet of those who were found a place, 55% survived.

Professor Osmond Reynolds, who runs University College Hospital's Intensive Care Nursery, stated: 'We are having to turn babies away every day although they desperately need the expert care which only units like ours can provide. Some of the babies we turn away remain in special care baby units but their chances of survival are much reduced. They are also more likely to survive handicapped because it is only with the facilities and staff available in intensive care units that respiration can be closely monitored and levels of oxygen properly adjusted. If a baby's breathing stops for too long or if it is given the wrong amount of oxygen its brain may be damaged irreparably.'

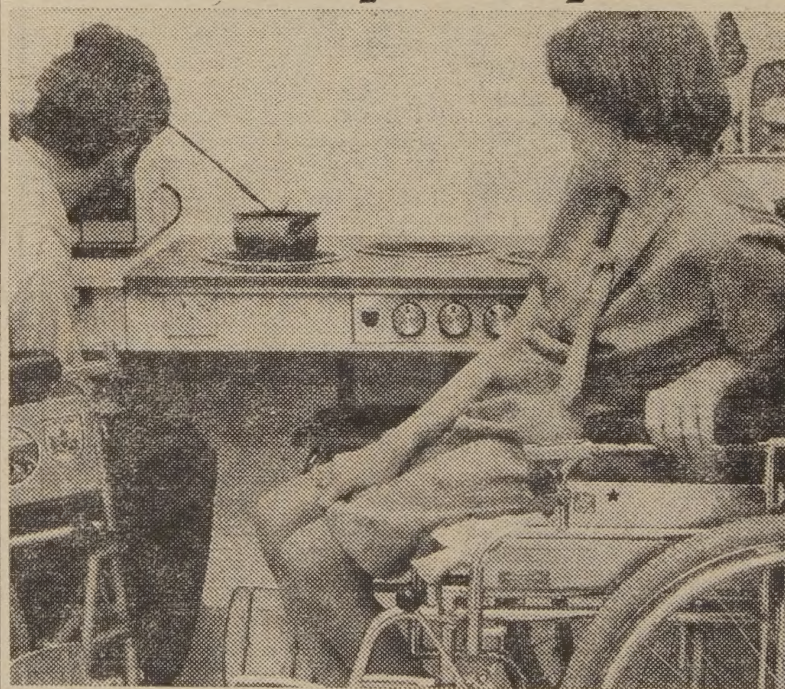
### Turned away

Nearly 400 babies a year are turned away from University College Hospital Intensive Care Nursery and it will be at least another two years before any more cots are made available.

Mr James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, said: 'Recent developments in neonatal care have made the healthy survival of nearly all low birth weight babies a real possibility. The Expert Group on Special Care for Babies recommended as far back as 1971 that the present requirement of intensive care cots in England was 220. Yet eight years on we still have only 175. If intensive care is not given, some at-risk babies will die or will be at risk of physical and mental impairment. Surely the provision of more cots is something that could be achieved at relatively little cost.'

'This Society has been asking for widespread improvements in Britain's maternity services because it is a practical idea. Leaving aside humanitarian considerations, the cost of handicap is enormous; as much as £1 million to care for one severely handicapped person from 16 to the age of 65. Surely it is plain common-sense to see that at-risk babies are given the chance very early in life to survive to be healthy and normal members of the community.'

## Independence in 'Tranquillity'



● 'Is there life before breakfast?' reads a jokey fun poster pinned up in the Hancox specially designed Habinteg kitchen. Boiling eggs by means of a spoon fitted to his helmet was one of Vic's first domestic tasks when the prospect of independent living was discussed. When they were in residential care, managing to get their own breakfast without going down into the main dining room was one of Ann and Vic's first big steps. 'It was simply bliss,' says Ann.

Cont. from Page 5  
market to stock up on weekly food shopping. Tub gardening is an activity which Ann and Vic enjoy at the day centre and they also have their own patio roof garden at home, which Vic looks after.

A development like Habinteg, which is a housing association providing a limited number of mixed housing schemes for able-bodied and disabled people, relies a great deal on the relevant local authority for back-up support. Mrs Diane Sullivan, Habinteg's Housing Officer, is full of praise for the support given to Ann

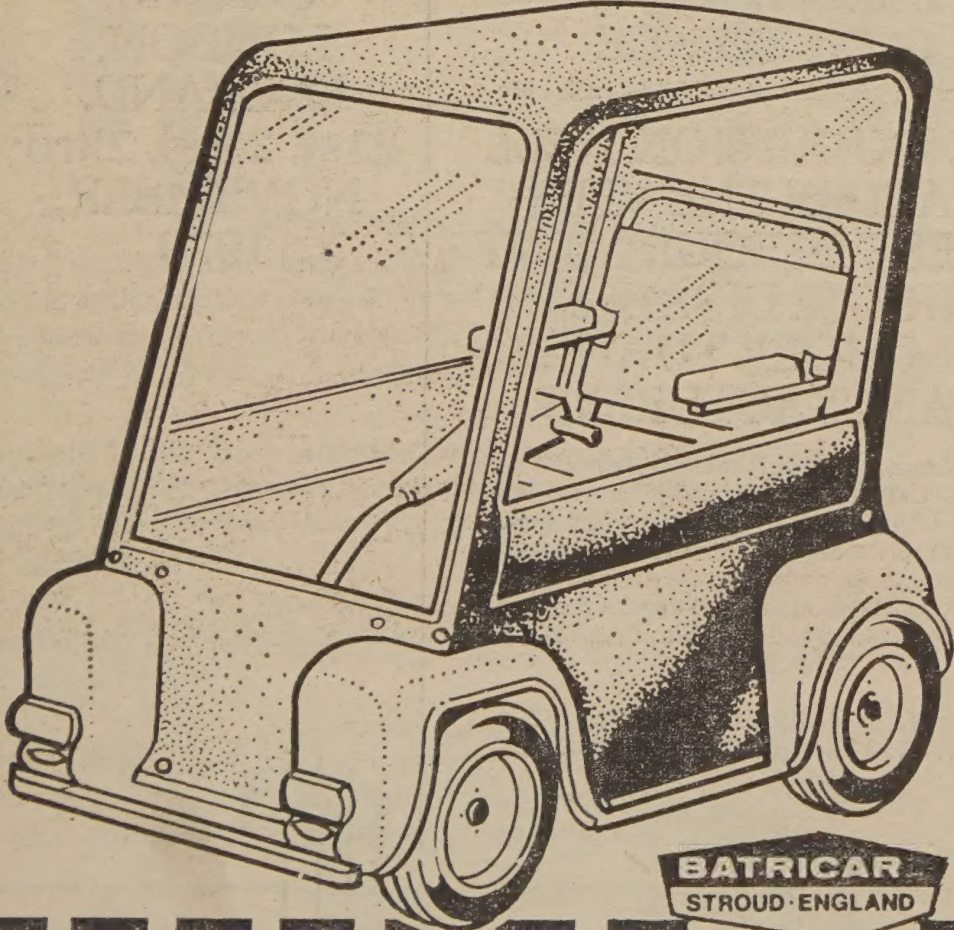
and Vic by Islington Social Services.

Originally, when they were first interviewed by Mrs Sullivan for the Habinteg flat, Ann and Vic felt they wanted a month's trial. However Miss Crouch, their social worker, felt they wouldn't fail the challenge. And from the day they actually moved in last February, Ann says that she and Vic were confident they would manage.

'From that day onwards, things could only get better,' says Ann. 'We are now living our own life like any other married couple.'

## Mobility for the disabled

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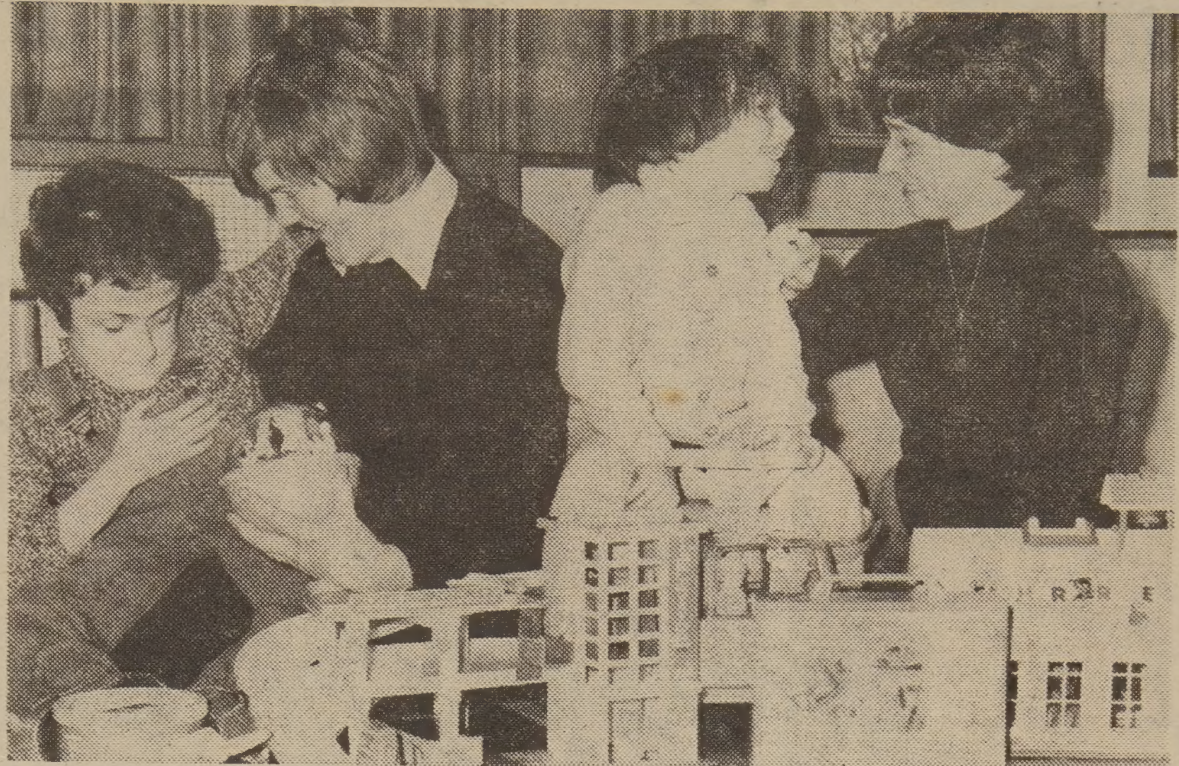


# People and places in the news



**LESLIE** Crowther, a stalwart supporter of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, dressed as a towncrier, kicks off at the gala charity football match between the Northiam 75 Football Club and the Showbiz Eleven. It may have been unseasonal, but the match was a roaring success.

Other attractions included the Sussex Brass Band and the East Sussex Majorettes. Altogether the proceeds from the afternoon's entertainment which included raffles and stalls, came to around £500 which will go towards Colwall Court, a holiday home in Bexhill run by the Stars Organisation for Spastics.



**NEW** toys — £200 worth — for The Spastics Society Family Help Unit in Bury St Edmunds were presented by pupils from Great Cornard Upper School. Sixteen-year-old Alison Hall happily plays with six-year-old Judy Moskvits, while another Upper School pupil, David Dean, strikes up a friendship with Lee Hutson, both 16.

**PICTURE** below shows another presentation to the Bury Unit. Two twin pushchairs were handed over by regulars of the Suffolk Hunt Pub. Mr Jack Farrow (far right), who organised the collection, makes the pushchair presentation to Margaret Cresswell, head of the unit.



**THE** sky's the limit as far as fund raising is concerned according to Carol Myer, principal of the White Lodge Centre for spastic children in Chertsey, Surrey.

When Foxhills Country Club adopted White Lodge as its charity for this year, Carol was invited to take a trip in this gigantic green balloon owned by the Test Valley Balloon Group, sponsored by the Greenham Group.

And when high-flying Carol finally got her feet firmly back on the ground again, she had yet another surprise — a cheque for £3,600 from the Greenham Tool Company, also part of the Greenham Group.

Picture by the Surrey Herald.



**MRS** Oriska Cameron, Senior Appeals Officer, South East Region, presents a certificate to sixth formers of Brune Park

School, Gosport, whose door-to-door collection raised more than £500 for the Save a Baby Campaign in less than a fortnight.

Picture by Portsmouth News.



**FIFTEEN - YEAR - OLD** Andrew Jackson, from Humberston, is now able to communicate with other people thanks to a new electrical page-turner presented to him recently by the Grimsby Clee Round Table.

Andrew cannot speak nor move any of his limbs, and previously only his mother and teachers at Sutcliffe Special School, Grimsby, could understand him. But the new machine, which was specially ordered from the Royal Cornwall Hospital, will allow Andrew not only to read books but also to turn the pages of the book of sign language cards which his teachers have prepared for him. Before the new machine was delivered, teachers had to show Andrew each sign card in

turn before he came to the appropriate one.

Andrew's mother Mrs Eileen Jackson, pictured above, commented: 'It is a great relief for all of us. At the moment he cannot do anything on his own. He cannot even read alone because he rips the pages

when he tries to turn them over.'

With Andrew and his mother are Mr R. Bemrose (left), Chairman of Grimsby Clee Round Table, and Table member Mr Brian Ruffel-Ward.

Picture by the Grimsby Evening Telegraph.



**Picture left:**

**COUNT** that in the holiday kitty, says Corporal Ian Wilkins (right) to Mr Tony McEnvoy, deputy head of The Spastics Society's Meldreth Manor School, near Royston, Herts, as he hands over the proceeds of a sponsored darts evening in the Corporals' Mess.

The soldiers from Basingbourne Barracks raised £60, which will be used towards taking some of the Meldreth children on holiday later in the year.

Picture by Herts and Cambs Reporter

**THE** Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Portsmouth, Mr and Mrs Richard Sotnick, receive a £500 cheque from Mr Harry Cape, treasurer of the Portsmouth and District Spastics Society. The money was collected in a door to door drive for the Lord Mayor's Appeal Fund.

According to Mr Hedley Chappell, group secretary, and member of the Society's Executive Council (far left), it was felt that money donated directly to the Lord Mayor's appeal to buy equipment for the protec-

tion of newborn babies would help prevent crippling birth defects.

'We are all parents of handicapped children in the Society,' said Mr Chappell. 'We hope the money will provide for prevention of damage at birth here in the Portsmouth area by purchasing the proper hospital equipment to deal with dangerous births.'

Also in the picture are Mr Ernest Keeping, chairman (second on left) and Mr Reg Moon, a member of the committee (far right).

Picture by Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers Ltd



# We're having a swinging time!

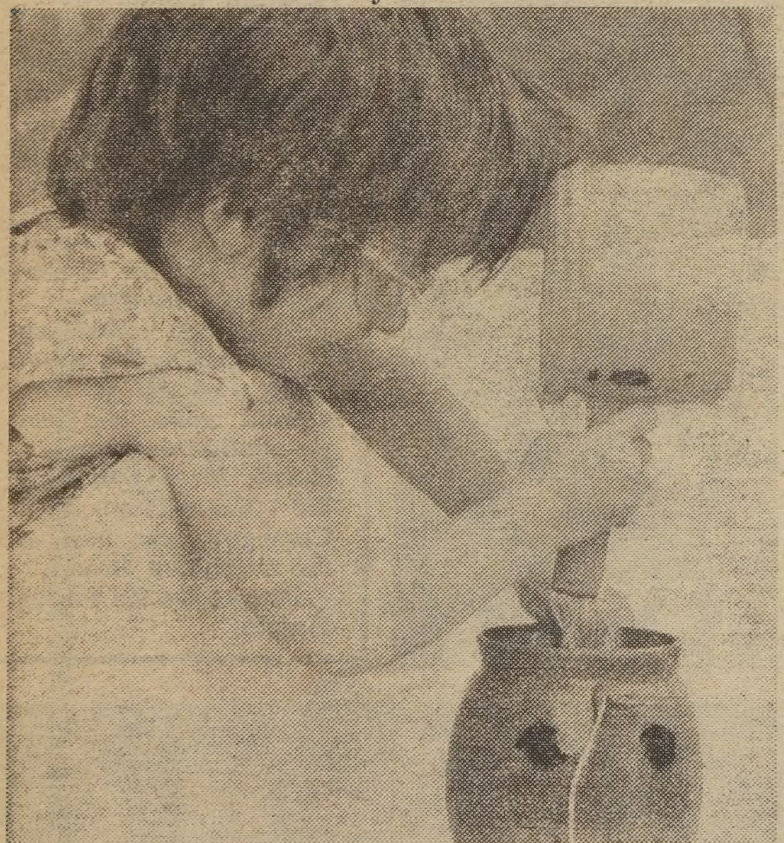
## Our 'holiday snaps' from the Family Help Unit



● JANET Holland has a ride on the swing, supplying the motive power is house mother Becky Matter. Young visitors to the Society's Family Help Unit at Bury St Edmunds are cared for by devoted staff.



● MORE swinging fun, and Andrew Corkett, Sonia Podd and Ian Connolly, are given a push by the Family Help Unit's deputy head Barbara Abrahams.



● THIS is fun . . . Sonia Podd, above, enjoys herself getting wet, while, below Trevor Shutter gets ready for a drive round the garden at the unit.



● HAVING a splashing time — Lisa Nolan, Trudy West and Sonia Podd play in the water trough helped by house mothers Judith Summons and April Ray.



● HOUSE mother Judith Summons plays with Nigel Cobb. The unit has a wonderful selection of toys and equipment to keep the young visitors happy.

**Call it off  
Bob and June!**

Cont. from Page 1

let's go to Brighton."

"The response has been fantastic, with offers to push and sponsor us. I am personally sponsored for £200 already."

Bob plans to donate the money raised to the Alfreed Morris Day Centre, and the Frobisher Institute run by the Inner London Education Authority, which both he and June attend.

He first ran into trouble when he began approaching insurance companies for cover for the race. "They all said, 'No way,' because we are both handicapped." He rejects the idea that the race is ill-advised and claims that even the Police are behind them in the venture. "We will have plenty of people keeping an eye on us, we will be on the pavement most of the way, and I don't see any danger. My family think it is a good idea and have not voiced any objections."

Mr James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, had this to say: "I admire their courage greatly—but it is a great risk. They must take into account the anguish of their families if, unhappily, they were involved in an accident."

"People say they are taking quiet roads, but the point is that with the volume of traffic about nowadays there are no quiet roads, and they cannot be on pavements all the time."

"My personal opinion is that it is very unwise."

His view is shared by the Society's Director of Fund Raising, Michael Brophy, who said bluntly: "They mustn't do it, and if they had planned to donate any money to the Society we would refuse it. This wheelchair race is well intentioned but foolhardy."

Mr Nicholas Grant is manager of the Alfreed Morris Day Centre in Lambeth, attended by Bob and June, and he declared: "As far as I am concerned I would not have sanctioned this — it is very dangerous. However, they are organising this as private individuals and there is nothing I can do. I admire them wanting to be independent; they are adults but I do not feel it is serving a lot."

Bob and June plan to start their race at 6 am with 100 pushers, and expect to finish between 6-8 in the evening, and Bob insists "We are going down the quietest route possible."

### Joan's success story:

## It all began with a gift...

THE North London Spastics Association gave Joan Ross, of Hornsey, a typewriter — and she did the rest. The typewriter was to help her with her studies and study she did — first her 'O' and 'A' levels at a technical college, before moving on to Middlesex Polytechnic for a degree course. Now Joan, severely handicapped, confined to a wheelchair and with a speech impediment has her BA degree in Humanities.

Her next goal was a job, however, Haringey Council turned her down but Islington Council came up with a three-month trial in its social services department, as an administrator.

"I would have loved to have been a teacher really," says Joan, "but I realise with my handicaps that this would be too difficult. But in social services I will be

working for other people who are handicapped, particularly children. I wanted to work for Haringey Council but they didn't want me, for what I think are obvious reasons. They probably thought I couldn't do the job because of my handicaps. Their refusal only made me more determined!" In 1977 Joan was a runner-up in the Society's Achievement Award.

### SPASTICS NEWS

Published by The Spastics Society.

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Editorial office: The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel: 01-636 5020.

Advertising representative: Renee MacNeil, address as above.

The views expressed in Spastics News are not necessarily those of The Spastics Society.

Printed by F. J. Parsons, Observer Buildings, Cambridge Road, Hastings, Sussex.